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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR MAY 06, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for May 06, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

CUMHURİYET / RADIKL: Ahmet Ersin, a member of Turkish Parliaments Human Rights Commission (TPHRC) and a CHP (Republican People's Party) deputy from Izmir, appealed to the TPHRC to take on the issue of the 15-year-old girl from Diarbikr who was engaged to a man three years older through a religious ceremony and who has been subjected to family violence (see 55 press summ).

ZAMAN / YENİ SAFAK: The woman caught with 1.5 kilograms of C-4 explosives in front of the Office of the Security Director in Iyrbakir (see press summ 5/5) was reportedly mixed in with the 350 people that had come to the Office of the Security Director in Diarbikr to make statements related to a November 2000 incident (see press summ 5/5.). Police reportedly noticed she was acting suspiciously. The paper today reports that the woman's target was the Security Director's Office.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: The court ordered the release of eight people who were reportedly arrested by the Istanbul police for attempting to extort money from DEHAP Istanbul administrators (see 5/5 press summ). Approximately 100 DEHAP members, chanting slogans, protested their release in front of the court building.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Democratic Society Movement members organized a dinner and mediated successfully to amicably resolve a feud between the Alkan and Ekin families. (Note: The feud between the families broke out in June 2003 and caused the death of 4 people.) Two thousand people participated in the event including human rights activists and local government and DEHAP officials.

CUMHURİYET: A group of students from the Patriotic Front, the Initiative of the Universities, and members of the TKP (Turkish Communist Party), will travel from Ankara to stage a protest tomorrow in Incirlik district against the GOT's decision to extend U.S. use of Incirlik Airbase.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The response of the Prime Minister's Office to 300,000 petitions submitted by the DEHAP Youth Branches demanding constitutional changes was that the petitions included suggestions and requests that would damage the national unity of Turkey, if implemented. According to Ozgur Gundem, the petitions called for amendments within the 3rd, 42nd and 66th provisions of the Constitution.

OZGUR GUNDEM: In Sanliurfa, the first hearing was opened in the case of nine people against whom charges were pressed for chanting illegal slogans during the opening of a private Kurdish language course. The case was adjourned until November 2005 to provide time for collecting evidence.

EVRENSEL / YENİ SAFAK: Unidentified people opened fire on a car and killed the muhtar (headman) of Sugeldi village in Catak district of Van and two other people in the car. Jandarma initiated an investigation into whether the incident was related to a feud which allegedly broke out last year. Yeni Safak reports that the incident has connections with recently conducted headman elections.

SABAH (GUNEY) / CUMHURİYET / ZAMAN / EKSPRES / OZGUR GUNDEM: The Mayor of Adana, Aytac Durak, angry with Milliyet about a "baseless news report, fired criticism at the media and said that violation of one's civil rights and freedom of expression ought not be construed as the same concepts. Milliyet allegedly wrote that "Sedat Peker and Aytac Durak confronted each other on a mining issue." (Note: Sedat Peker is a criminal gang leader. End Note.) Durak will reportedly file a legal suit against the author and the paper.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. RADIKAL / SABAH (GUNEY) / EKSPRES / ZAMAN / BOLGE: Umit Ozgumus, Chairperson of the Adana Chamber of Commerce, announced that financial losses incurred by industrialists due to frequent blackouts and electricity power failures might be remedied if the industrialists opened legal action against TEDAS (Turkish State-owned Electricity Company).

